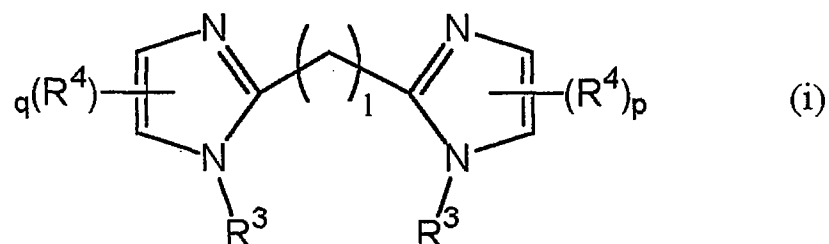


**Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-10, without prejudice to the filing of one or more divisional applications directed to the subject matter thereof, and add new claims 11-18, as shown below in the following listing of all claims ever presented. The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of the claims.

1-10. (Canceled)

11. (New) A catalyst comprising a nickel compound and a compound of formula (i):



wherein  $R^3$  represents a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group,  $R^4$  represents a hydrogen atom or a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group,  $l$  represents an integer of 1 to 3, and  $p$  and  $q$  independently represent an integer of 0 to 2.

12. (New) The catalyst according to claim 11, wherein the nickel compound is selected from the group consisting of nickel salts and pi-complex compounds of 0-valent or divalent nickel.

13. (New) The catalyst according to claim 11, wherein the nickel compound is selected from the group consisting of nickel chloride, nickel bromide, nickel iodide, nickel nitrate, nickel acetate and bis(1,5-cyclooctadiene) nickel (0).

14. (New) The catalyst according to claim 11, wherein  $R^3$  represents a  $C_{1-4}$  alkyl group and  $R^4$  represents a  $C_{1-4}$  alkyl group.

15. (New) The catalyst according to claim 11, wherein the compound of formula (i) is selected from the group consisting of bis(N-methylimidazole-2-yl) methane, bis(1,2-N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) ethane, and bis(1,3-(N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) propane.

16. (New) The catalyst according to claim 12, wherein the compound of formula (i) is selected from the group consisting of bis(N-methylimidazole-2-yl) methane, bis(1,2-N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) ethane, and bis(1,3-(N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) propane.

17. (New) The catalyst according to claim 13, wherein the compound of formula (i) is selected from the group consisting of bis(N-methylimidazole-2-yl) methane, bis(1,2-N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) ethane, and bis(1,3-(N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) propane.

18. (New) The catalyst according to claim 14, wherein the compound of formula (i) is selected from the group consisting of bis(N-methylimidazole-2-yl) methane, bis(1,2-N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) ethane, and bis(1,3-(N-methylimidazole-2-yl)) propane.